U.S. Department of Education 2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

A Non-Public School - 13PV200

School Type (Public Schools)	Charter:	Title 1	Magnet	Choice ▽	
Name of Principal: Mrs. Shar			_		
Official School Name: Imma	culate Concep	tion Catholic	School		
School Mailing Address:	223 South 14t Fort Smith, A		<u>6</u>		
County: <u>Sebastian</u>	State School (Code Number	*: <u>na</u>		
Telephone: (479) 783-6798	E-mail: sblen	ntlinger@icsc	hoolfs.org		
Fax: (479) 783-0510	Web site/URI	L: www.icscl	hoolfs.org		
I have reviewed the informatic - Eligibility Certification), and			~	ity requirements	on page 2 (Part I
				Date	
(Principal's Signature)					
Name of Superintendent*: MI	s. Vernell Bow	<u>ven</u> Superint	tendent e-mail:	vbowen@dolr.or	<u>rg</u>
District Name: Catholic Dioce	ese of Little Ro	ock District F	Phone: (501) 66	<u>54-0340</u>	
I have reviewed the information - Eligibility Certification), and			ing the eligibil	ity requirements	on page 2 (Part I
				Date	
(Superintendent's Signature)					
Name of School Board Presid	ent/Chairperso	n: Mr. Ken R	<u>ossi</u>		
I have reviewed the informatic - Eligibility Certification), and					on page 2 (Part I
				Date	
(School Board President's/Ch	airperson's Sig	gnature)			

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools (Aba.Kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

^{*}Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

- 1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
- 2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
- 3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
- 4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
- 5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
- 6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
- 7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
- 8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
- 9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
- 10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
- 11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

Questions 1 and 2 are for Public Schools only.

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SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

- 3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: <u>Urban or large central city</u>
- 4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 26
- 5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	21	29	50
K	17	14	31
1	18	14	32
2	13	17	30
3	23	17	40
4	19	20	39
5	21	20	41
6	16	25	41
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
To	otal in App	lying School:	304

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:	1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
	5 % Asian
	1 % Black or African American
	16 % Hispanic or Latino
	0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
	73 % White
	4 % Two or more races
	100 % Total
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Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 4% This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	7
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	7
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	14
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	321
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.04
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	4

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school:	23%
Total number of ELL students in the school:	70
Number of non-English languages represented:	4
Specify non-English languages:	

Spanish, Filipino, Vietnamese, Laotian, Hindi

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals:	17%
Total number of students who qualify:	51

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services:	10%
Total number of students served:	29

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

0 Autism	Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deafness	3 Other Health Impaired
0 Deaf-Blindness	6 Specific Learning Disability
0 Emotional Disturbance	17 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
0 Mental Retardation	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
3 Multiple Disabilities	0 Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Full-Time	Part-Time
Administrator(s)	2	0
Classroom teachers	17	2
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	3	5
Paraprofessionals	1	3
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	5	6
Total number	28	16

12.	Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that	at is, the	number of	students i	n the s	chool
	divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom te	eachers,	e.g., 22:1:			

18:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	98%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

	14.	For	schools	ending	in grade	12	(high	schools	;):
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Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size:	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	%
Enrolled in a community college	 %
Enrolled in vocational training	 %
Found employment	 %
Military service	 %
Other	 %
Total	0%

15. Indicate whether yo	our school has previous	y received a National	Blue Ribbon Schools award:

0	No
	Vac

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

Immaculate Conception Catholic School, following the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, develops the whole child, instills Gospel values, inspires a love of learning, and promotes academic excellence in a diverse, nurturing community.

Immaculate Conception Catholic School is a parochial school located in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The school was established in 1930 by Immaculate Conception Parish to educate the children of Irish and German immigrants and staffed by the Sisters of Mercy. The school provides a quality education in a Catholic Christian environment and encourages students to develop their talents and abilities to their full potential.

The present school building was constructed in 1930 to accommodate students in grades K-8. In 1987, the school changed its model to K-6 when an inter-parish Catholic junior high was established. A preschool program was added in 2006. Currently, Immaculate Conception School has 304 students enrolled for preschool-sixth grade with two classes at each grade level. The campus includes the main school building which houses grades 1-6, offices, and fine arts classrooms. The kindergarten and preschool buildings, gymnasium, playground and field, and parish church complete the school facilities.

Immaculate Conception School families represent diverse religious, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds. 84% of students are Catholic, and the remaining 16% of students practice various Christian and non-Christian faith traditions. A significant percentage of parents have earned a high school diploma, while the majority have college degrees and work in professional occupations. 56% of our families earn above \$100,000 annually and 10% earn less than \$40,000 a year. The cultural diversity of the student body has more than doubled from 13% in 2002-2003 to 28% in 2012-2013. Factors impacting this increase include: changes in parish demographics, increased marketing and recruitment of minorities in parish and community, and significant funds dedicated for tuition assistance to families who demonstrate financial need. Over \$120,000.00 was awarded for the 2012- 2013 school year. The pastor, principal, and school board firmly believe that any child in our parish who desires a Catholic education must be welcome in the parish school.

The school is guided by the leadership of pastor, Fr. Greg Luyet and principal, Sharon Blentlinger and governed by a consultative school board whose actions become effective upon the approval of the pastor. The principal is the leader of the school and is charged with the administration of the school in accordance with diocesan guidelines.

The Immaculate Conception School staff consists of a principal, a curriculum director, two office staff, twenty-four teachers, four teacher assistants, a media/librarian, certified special education and art teachers, a technology teacher, and four cafeteria employees. All instructional faculty have a minimum of a bachelor's degree, and 45% have advanced degrees in their areas of expertise. Personal commitment to the school mission is evidenced by 14 staff members with more than 20 years of teaching experience at Immaculate Conception School.

Faculty members are members of many professional organizations and often hold leadership positions, for example: ACEI, On the Border Reading Association, and Western Arkansas Art Educators. Staff members have received recognition as Arkansas Art Teacher of the Year, Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year, and Who's Who Among American Teachers. The school nurse received the 2012 Duquesne University Alumni Award, "Mind, Body, Spirit." The principal and curriculum director serve on accreditation teams for nonpublic schools. The principal is a board member and the current president of ANSAA, Arkansas Nonpublic Schools Accrediting Association. The principal was named as 2005 NCEA Distinguished

Principal and received the Education Community Leadership award in 2006 from the Leadership Fort Smith Alumni Association.

Dedication to faith, school, and community has culminated in 83 years of excellence as evidenced by the following accomplishments:

- A safe and secure environment through controlled building access, security cameras throughout campus, fully enclosed P.E./play areas, carefully designed arrival, dismissal, and travel procedures
- Student leadership in weekly and Sunday Mass celebrations
- 83-year tradition of daily morning assembly of entire school community for recitation of pledges, mission statement, announcements, student recognition, and prayer
- Student service projects to incarnate the precepts of Catholic Social Teaching through partnership with local charitable agencies
- 97% and above student attendance
- First school in Fort Smith, AR, to utilize smart boards in every classroom
- Strong alumni support for Immaculate Conception School faith and academic traditions through multi-generational enrollment and family involvement
- Front runner in implementation of: all-day kindergarten (1987), after school care (1989), certified special education program (1996), after school homework assistance (1997), summer care (2003), STEM learning camp (2009)
- After school tutoring for ELL and eligible Title I students
- All Saints Day program—45 year tradition
- Parent led fundraisers including: Spaghetti Dinner/43 years, Spring Festival/40 years and Pie sales raising over \$125,000 annually
- Student Leadership Day
- "Guardian Angel" student mentoring program
- *24% of Fort Smith high schools' National Merit Scholars from 2002- 2012 are I.C. School alumni

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. The Stanford Achievement Test, 10th Edition is the standardized assessment administered each spring to all students in grades 1-6. Results for grade levels, classes within grade levels, and individual students are reported in Raw Scores, Scaled Scores, Percentile Rank, and Normal Curve Equivalents. Results as reported on the School Class Summary reports are examined. Percentile Rank scores of 70 and above are a school goal at each grade level and in all curriculum levels but especially Total Reading, Total Math, and Basic Battery. Scaled Scores that define the top 15% of the nation in reading and math as published by CAPE, the Council for American Private Education, are used as benchmarks for proficient student outcomes. Normal Curve Equivalent scores are also examined to track academic growth for individual students and groups of students from year to year. The School Clusters Summary Report is used to identify specific sub-tests and curriculum clusters where classes and individual students scored less than 80 percent.

The Metropolitan Readiness Test is the standardized kindergarten assessment used in the spring of each year. This instrument assesses emerging literacy concepts, developing language concepts, and developing mathematics concepts. Raw scores, percentile rank, and Stanine scores are determined using norm tables. A student's performance is determined to be at one of the following levels: Approaching, On Level, or Beyond Age Level in each of the assessment areas. This assessment is used as supporting evidence of a child's achievement and readiness for first grade.

B. The Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Little Rock scores the tests for all Catholic schools in Arkansas. Demographic information is not collected in the testing process; therefore, data for subgroups is not included in test reports.

Standardized test score data is analyzed each year, initially by the principal and curriculum director. Current data is compared to previous years' scores to identify improvements, declines, or areas of possible concern. Prior to each school year, the faculty examine and further disaggregate data to determine specific clusters for instructional planning and curriculum improvements, facilitating horizontal and vertical alignments.

Performance data in reading for 2008 and 2009 exceeded school goals with a downward trend in 2010. This decrease was identified by the administration and was a significant focus throughout the following academic year for discussion, planning, and implementation for curriculum development. Since 2010, reading scores have improved each year due to the continued interpretation of test data and redesign of curriculum to strengthen student performance and outcomes.

Math performance levels for 2008 and 2009 did not consistently meet previously determined school goals of 70 percentile at all grade levels. Test scores in the areas of procedures and problem solving were generally in the mid 60 to high 70 percentiles with a downward trend in 2010. The same process as described for reading was applied to the math cluster. Math scores have improved. In the spring of 2012, the lowest Total Math score was 70 percentile and the highest was 87 percentile.

Factors impacting losses in reading scores are the administration of the new Stanford Achievement Test, 10^{th} edition in 2010 using updated norm groups and changes in student demographics with a significant increase in families where English is not the language spoken in the home and the economic and educational levels are lower than was previously the norm. These factors directly impact the ability and availability of adults to assist students with academic preparation outside of the school day.

The continual rise in test scores across all curriculum areas since 2010 are due to:

- extensive study of the curriculum in conjunction with standardized test data and other criterionreferenced assessments
- improving horizontal and vertical curriculum alignments
- greater emphasis on weaknesses in identified curriculum areas
- teacher understanding of Stanford 10 test format and vocabulary
- utilizing consistent vocabulary and format in everyday instruction and assessment
- greater emphasis on higher order thinking skills
- more effective use of technology
- implementation of an after-school tutoring program staffed by certified personnel and volunteers for students from non-English speaking families
- professional development focused on providing the tools and resources for staff to be successful in improvements
- teacher-designed instructional strategies to scaffold targeted curriculum areas
- a monthly meeting with Hispanic parents to improve communication, educate them on strategies to assist their children with homework and to greater inculcate them into the school culture

For improved outcomes in reading, Daily Oral Language was implemented in grades one through six, a new language arts program was acquired, and STAR and Accelerated Reader programs were more effectively used.

For improved outcomes in math, a supplemental workbook was adopted in grades one through four that maximizes long-term retention and reinforces previously taught skills, increased hands-on experiences, licenses for web-based programs that can be used at school and home were purchased such as IXL and Mathletics.

2. Using Assessment Results:

a) Immaculate Conception relies primarily on Stanford Achievement Test assessment data to analyze and improve instruction and student learning. The diocesan Catholic Schools Office selected the Stanford 10 assessment tool based on its ability to measure student progress against high academic standards. The diocese also owns equipment to score the tests. The Stanford 10 is a valid and reliable tool for objective measurement of achievement.

Our faculty uses percentile rank to identify areas of concern. Scores falling below the 70th percentile are earmarked for improvement in order to maintain and improve our test scores. School Summary Cluster Reports and Sub-Cluster Reports show specific instructional concepts that were assessed. Any skill receiving a correct rate below 80% indicates a specific skill deficit. Instructors then use the Stanford 10 Compendium to determine how the deficit skill was assessed. This report also indicates question formatting and vocabulary. Faculty from each grade level and/or subject area develop and implements an instructional plan to address all deficiencies. Following intense effort to utilize scores and implement a successful plan, our school was recently commended by ANSAA, our accrediting agency, for the ability to analyze standardized testing information and improve individual student achievement.

Our school relies on a variety of criteria-referenced instruments. Primary grades (K-4) use the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and The Developmental Spelling Assessment. Kindergarten

administers the Metropolitan Readiness Test as an indicator of reading and math skills in the spring of each school year. This test is comprised of three components: Beginning Reading, Story Comprehension, and Quantitative to address Math Skills. Letter Identification and Concepts About Print screening tools are also utilized in the kindergarten program. Additional assessment tools appropriate for primary grades include Running Records, Early Literacy Learning Observation and Survey (ELLA). STAR Reading is primarily used for placement in our Accelerated Reading program. These reports are given to students and parents. Finally, a customized Math Pre and Post Testing instrument is administered to intermediate grades to measure student progress and need for remediation.

b) Avenues for informing parents, students, and the community of students' academic achievement include email notification, phone calls, written notes, school sign, quarterly report cards and mandatory parent-teacher conferences. Honor Roll cards are presented during morning assembly to students enrolled in grades 4-6. Principal's List recognition is given to students who score 3.8 - 4.0, Scholarship List recognizes those receiving a grade point average of 3.0 - 3.79, and Most Improved Certificates are awarded to one child in each class. On a daily basis, students have an opportunity to share exemplary work with the principal and are rewarded with an incentive of their choice.

Technology plays a vital role in promoting awareness of academic excellence within our community. Edline is an online communication tool used to record grades and distribute reports to parents via the Internet. Our student body is frequently recognized in the local newspaper as well as the *Arkansas Catholic* weekly newspaper, a publication sponsored by the Diocese of Little Rock. The Immaculate Conception School website is a popular resource as well. Other technological tools that are utilized include Facebook and Twitter.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The faculty of Immaculate Conception School shares successful strategies with others in a variety of ways. Examples include a presentation at the 2012 NCEA Conference on the topic of "Reading Recovery and Research"; preparation of displays demonstrating "Illustrated Country Reports" and "Model of Communities" at the Kansas City Regional Educational Fair; and presentation of multi-sensory teaching techniques at the Oklahoma Education Association Regional Conference. Professional development training contributions from the faculty include the presentation of an elementary development program, economics seminar, Arkansas History interactive workshop, facilitation of classroom forum, and technology demonstrations at the annual diocesan Professional Day. Teachers have served as adjunct faculty for Arkansas Tech University Extension Campus, University of Arkansas at Fort Smith art classes, Fort Smith Art Center, and UAFS Art Academy. The school nurse teaches a summer course, "Student Health Concerns," at the local educational COOP. Ideas and learning lessons are frequently shared through posts on popular web sites such as Wiki, Thinkfinity, Teachers Pay Teachers, Electronic Clearinghouse, and blogging.

Schools in the area have adopted programs initiated by our school including All Saints' Day program, Guardian Angel mentoring program, Book Parade, Veterans' Day program, after school care and summer programs, and STEM learning camp.

Immaculate Conception School takes advantage of many opportunities to share lessons learned by hosting professional development seminars for nonpublic schools in our region. In addition, our school is selected each year by the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith to mentor education majors. Various staff members have been highlighted in *Arkansas Catholic* weekly newspaper regarding butterfly garden, traveling cross, and Youth Speak. Under the guidance of the director of the Gifted and Talented program, student teams engineer products and develop marketing tools to promote their business concepts.

Faculty members are represented in a variety of professional organizations including Arkansas Reading Association, NCEA, Council for Exceptional Children, National Art Education Association as well as local chapter, and Arkansas Geographic Alliance. I.C. School is a collaborative ministry of the Institute of

the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. The principal and staff hold leadership roles with ANSAA and On The Border Reading Association.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

The school climate is unique and reflects the school's philosophy and objectives. The administrator facilitates an atmosphere in which faculty, staff, and students enjoy effective and harmonious relationships. Our school makes provisions for and develops guidelines in the following areas: nondiscrimination for admissions, student and parent orientations, extra-curricular activities, sportsmanship, student behavior, effective communication, public relations, and parental involvement.

Immaculate Conception School's increasing diversity better mirrors our parish population. Our school mission and philosophy is shared with all families and the school climate is evaluated through various studies and conversations. Guidelines are in place for participation in extra-curricular activities. Good behavior, self-esteem, and self-management principles are stressed and specific lessons are taught to develop these attitudes. Parents have the opportunity to volunteer through thirty-four committees of the Parent/Teacher Organization culminating in 4,363 annual hours of service and fundraising for the school. Parents receive a monthly newsletter and have access to Administrator's Plus, a comprehensive school data-based administrative system. Our school is active in the local community and opens its facilities to organizations to use for special programs. The staff participates in many community activities, service organizations, and Church organizations.

Immaculate Conception School is the first Catholic school in Arkansas to implement the *Leader in Me* process. *LIM* is an innovative school-wide model founded on the core belief that every child is a leader, has unique talents, and can make a positive difference in the world. In *LIM*, the *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Dr. Stephen Covey is tailored to the educational setting. School parents initially brought this concept to the principal, found means to fund it, and are greatly involved in the implementation process.

Edline, Facebook, School Reach (an automated school notification/emergency messaging system), are means that our school has found successful in working with families and community members for student success and school improvement.

Strategies for linking families and school:

- "Leader In Me" process by Stephen Covey
- Accessibility to staff via personal phone, email, and conferences
- Open House Events
- New Family Orientation
- Protecting God's Children certification and on-line continuing education
- EBook accessibility through school website

Strategies for building relationships within the local community:

- Spring Festival/Spaghetti Dinner
- Monthly service projects supporting local charities
- Sponsor/coach basketball teams, Scouting programs, and Battle of the Books Reading competitions locally and state-wide
- Collaborate with other area Catholic schools and local Mercy Hospital to sponsor running Club and Irish Festival.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Immaculate Conception School curriculum encompasses all learning experiences necessary to educate the total student: spiritually, mentally, socially, and physically. The curriculum reflects our school's mission, philosophy, goals, and objectives. Fundamental principles of student growth, learning theories, and educational trends are incorporated in all areas of the educational program. Long-range comprehensive curriculum goals are evaluated annually to ensure both vertical and horizontal alignment.

Immaculate Conception School takes seriously the responsibility to be a quality school with an instructional program that is faith-based by integrating Catholic Christian values and utilizing the "In Spirit and Truth" curriculum guide developed by the diocesan Catholic Schools Office. The Arkansas Frameworks and Common Core Standards for Language Arts and Math are also incorporated into the curriculum.

The educational program emerges from Immaculate Conception School's objectives and goals and provides opportunities for students to grow in knowledge and understanding both as individuals and as community members. Our program reflects the unique mission of the school as well as current trends in education and ongoing curriculum design and development. In addition, the educational program meets the terms of external elements such as college entrance requirements, accreditation standards, length of the school year, instructional times, state graduation requirements, standardized testing, placement testing, learning styles, and evaluation of student performance.

Each year, Immaculate Conception School administers the Metropolitan Readiness Test to kindergarten students and the Stanford 10 (SAT10) to students in grades 1-6. Data obtained from testing is utilized to determine curriculum and student needs. Our school uses a collaborative process for accessing Title I and special education services through the Fort Smith Public Schools to improve student achievement in language arts and math for those with learning or other special needs. Title I federal funds are used to purchase supplemental materials and hire tutors for students who qualify for remediation in reading and math.

Core curricular subjects include language arts, math, science, social studies, and religion. Our school takes pride in enhancing our science program through the use of our National Wildlife Federation habitat. Programs such as "Monarch Watch" provide hands-on experiences for students.

In addition, all students receive instruction in library, technology, Spanish, physical education, health and safety, and fine arts by staff certified in their instructional area. These subjects are a priority in our instructional programming. Guest speakers, community groups, and field trips are utilized often to enhance curriculum. A teacher certified with her Master's degree in Special Education-Mildly Handicapped serves children in kindergarten-sixth grades who have been diagnosed with learning disabilities in reading and/or math. In addition, our school offers a gifted program, Alpha, for qualifying students.

A homework room is staffed Monday-Thursday with a certified teacher and a bilingual tutor to assist students after school. This has positively impacted our ELL students.

2. Reading/English:

The goal of the literacy program at Immaculate Conception School is to develop independent readers, competent writers, critical thinkers, and articulate speakers.

Immaculate Conception School has chosen to implement a balanced approach to literacy that incorporates the five essential elements of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Students are instructed in whole groups and small groups to help accomplish the school's literacy goals. Literacy instruction at Immaculate Conception School is guided by assessment information, and teacher evaluation of each student's strengths and weaknesses through summative, formal, informal, and ongoing assessments.

In all grades at Immaculate Conception School, teachers create a literature rich environment that encourages active learning and supports student learning. The literacy program integrates reading and writing across all content areas, incorporates technology and media, and prepares students for the increasing demands of the 21st century. To help accomplish this goal, all teachers work to develop readers and writers who perform for authentic audiences through various grade-level productions

In grades K-2, literacy instruction is centered on teaching children how to read and write, and develop a lifelong love of reading. In addition to whole group explicit instruction, students are placed into small guided reading groups to develop, strengthen, and advance reading skills. These groups are determined by various assessments including the DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) and the Observation Survey. Students are instructed using leveled books.

In grades 3-6, literacy instruction is centered on developing a lifelong love of reading, helping students learn to read and read to learn, and helping students learn to write and write to learn. Students are instructed using a whole group method with explicit teaching. Students are exposed to novels, genre studies, and reading selections that include fiction and nonfiction. Students are assessed using the STAR reading assessment. Students also use Accelerated Reader to evaluate and encourage comprehension.

Students at Immaculate Conception School who are performing below grade level are placed in small groups or a one-on-one setting, and receive more intense, specialized, and explicit instruction in the area/areas of weakness. Students who remain below grade level after classroom interventions are referred for special education services.

For students in grades K-2 who are performing above grade level in reading, acceleration is offered through placement in small reading groups. In grades 4-6, students are identified for the Alpha program for gifted students.

3. Mathematics:

Immaculate Conception School incorporates the Common Core State Standards and the diocesan curriculum, "In Spirit and Truth", into the math program. This combination provides a very comprehensive curriculum. In recent years, the curriculum has been aligned both horizontally and vertically by the faculty to insure that all content areas are included. Each teacher analyzes the Stanford Achievement Test results and creates a plan of action that is included in the curriculum.

The math textbooks are available online for students, parents and teachers. In the lower grades, "Simple Solutions" math practice books are used daily at school and at home. To incorporate technology, every classroom uses an interactive whiteboard with the students. The lower grades use IXL.com and the upper grades use Mathletics.com to receive immediate feedback while practicing math skills. The students learn the skills necessary to create Excel spreadsheets in the computer lab.

In the classrooms, students are provided with whole group, small group, and individual instruction. There are many visuals and hands-on activities in all grades. For the lower grades, learning centers, multisensory activities, board games, rhymes, and songs are used. A representative from a local bank teaches a program called, "Dollars and Sense" to educate students about spending and saving. In the upper grades, Hands-on-Equations are learned to solidify pre-algebra concepts and 'math aerobics' is used to learn

about decimal placement. Our fifth and sixth grade students participate in the "Buff Bucks" program, an economics project where students learn the banking system. It includes payroll, making deposits, and paying bills. It is incorporated into the discipline plan and the study habit skills, and a reward system is used when students meet certain expectations.

Students who are performing below grade level have the opportunity to get extra help before school. The Learning Lab is available during school hours. Classroom modifications are implemented as recommended on the student's Service Plan. After school, a daily homework room is available to all students with an additional certified teacher present to help English Language Learners

Students who perform well above grade level are given opportunities to challenge their capabilities. For example, they are allowed to work ahead of their class independently with the guidance of the teacher. Sometimes they create and present a math lesson to the rest of the class. Students may also participate in local Quiz Bowl competitions.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Immaculate Conception School's art department was one of the first in our city, public or private, to have a certified art teacher and a dedicated art classroom on the elementary level. The two certified art teachers, one of whom has a Master's Degree, each have over 30 years of K-12 experience.

Art and music classrooms have projection and internet capabilities with a budget to support needed materials/media. Resources include an extensive in-classroom library in addition to the school library, the *Picturing America* humanities resource, and hundreds of art reproductions. Classroom time meets or exceeds minimum state requirements.

The visual arts curriculum broadens student learning to include vocabulary, knowledge and appreciation of art history, the elements and principles of design, development of practical, motor, and artistic skills, and opportunities to work together in cooperative ways. Projects from the several modes of art – drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, and crafts – use the media and methods of watercolor, tempera, pencil, colored pencil, markers, pastel, oil pastel, relief printing, papier mache, paper making, clay modeling, and various fiber arts.

Reading and writing activities to enhance literacy skills and creative and analytical thinking are incorporated into studio work, i.e. Sixth grade companion piece explaining their Surrealism drawings, fifth grade descriptive/explanatory paragraph about a genre painting, and 4th grade biographical artist reports. In the primary grades, students produce written critiques and vocabulary matching games, and the teacher often reads and displays picture books as inspiration for student work.

Students toured Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas. They have won many awards through participation in local and state competitions/exhibitions, including Young Arkansas Artists, Western Arkansas Regional, and River Valley Competition.

The music department, in addition to its regular curriculum and in cooperation with the homeroom teachers, gives students extended performance opportunities and experiences in the 4th-6th grade choir and in various presentations for the school and community. Other fine arts activities include *Earquake* with the Fort Smith Symphony, attendance at high school plays, and on-site visits by the symphony string quartet and Trinity Junior High School Band. Students are often requested to sing at school and community events.

In addition, the school choir augments weekly and Sunday Mass celebrations with liturgically and age appropriate selections that enhance worship and prayer for our parish and school communities.

5. Instructional Methods:

Teachers at Immaculate Conception School strive to reach students at all levels of learning ability with various learning styles. They use many methods of instruction to teach each individual. A multi-sensory approach is incorporated whenever possible.

In the primary grades, students are placed in reading groups based on Development Reading Assessment (DRA), Accelerated Reading results, and STAR Reading scores. Basal readers are used that include below level books for struggling readers and English Language Learners. Literature units are the basis for instruction highlighting comprehension and vocabulary development. Leveled books are also used. Teacher assistants and parent/grandparent volunteers work with struggling learners one-on-one. The Starfall website is used for individual practice.

Students diagnosed with learning disabilities receive special instruction in the Resource Room. Direct small group instruction is provided in reading, math, and spelling as well as modifications and accommodations in the regular classrooms for all subjects. Students receive intensive phonics instruction using Orton-Guillingham based programs, whole word instruction using a multi-sensory approach (VAKT), and direct teacher instruction. Computer programs, interactive whiteboard activities, Barnell-Loft Specific Skills series, and manipulatives are used to enhance instruction. Tutoring is provided during scheduled study halls. The Title I homework room for English Language Learners and after school homework room provide individualized help.

In math, students are taught using manipulatives, math aerobics, games, cooperative learning activities, interactive whiteboard activities, IXL, and Mathletics. Fifth and sixth grade students who are gifted in math may work ahead of the class with teacher guidance.

The arts are an important extension to the learning methods. Art mediums, dioramas, models, and music are integrated with all subjects. Students develop presentation and speaking skills in programs such as Readers' Theater, puppet shows, All Saints' Day, American Heritage, Book Parade, Veterans' Day, and Explorers presentations. The National Wildlife Federation Habitat with Monarch Watch facilitates real-world, hands-on experiences across the curriculum. Alpha (gifted and talented program) serves gifted students.

Interactive whiteboards and computers in every classroom are utilized across the curriculum to create Power Point presentations, Publisher projects, and to present educational games, videos, and movies that supplement units. The computer lab provides extra practice and direct instruction with all subjects. Teachers use document cameras, video cameras, iPods, and webcams to facilitate learning.

Educational excursions within a 150 mile radius are taken at every grade level to take advantage of community resources such as parks, museums, zoos, farms, historical sites and government buildings.

6. Professional Development:

Immaculate Conception School's faculty and staff have a varied selection of opportunities for professional development throughout the academic year and summer break. The school provides up to 75% of the 60 hours of professional development material required for an educator to maintain licensure in Arkansas. Professional development needs are assessed year round with input from faculty and staff. Through staff contributions and analysis of current educational trends and research, administration determines the overall needs in instructional strategies, assessment, curriculum development, technology, and spiritual growth and provides information or instruction in these areas. Opportunities for professional growth exist at the local, state, and national level. Funding for this learning is provided through the school budget, federal funds allocated by our LEA (Fort Smith Public Schools), ANSAA, Arkansas Department of Education, and professional webinars. The school maintains memberships in professional organizations

to allow staff access to all available resources with: National Catholic Educators Association, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Council of Teachers of English, International Reading Association, and International Society of Technology in Education.

Immaculate Conception School is a community built on Christian values emphasizing leadership and academic success. As part of our mission, we believe it is imperative every child realize his or her potential. Beginning with the 2012 school year, our school chose to implement the Leader In Me program. This process will be a focal point of professional development for three years. Leader in Me is a ubiquitous leadership development strategy that increases teacher pride and engagement. This development will be continually reinforced in all areas of teaching and professional development throughout implementation.

An integral part of our school's professional development each year is the evaluation of our students' standardized test scores with focus on skills that fall below 80%. Teachers and administration concentrate on identifying these curriculum areas. Grade level teachers meet and develop instructional plans for promoting growth in targeted skills areas. Teachers meet with grade level teachers above and below their own to share strategies and content ensuring there are no gaps in instruction.

Immaculate Conception School's academic focus is based on Diocese of Little Rock "In Spirit and Truth" Curriculum Guide. The guide has been updated to align with the recent adoption of national Common Core State Standards. Professional development activities ensuring implementation of the Common Core Standards into instructional practice are an annual focus of the administration.

7. School Leadership:

Immaculate Conception School principal believes it takes all members of an entity: students, parents, staff, and community, with diverse talents, ideas, and strengths to create a successful, ongoing learning environment. Each member of the community must feel valued and respected as well as have respect for other members' unique contributions. Leadership assures that student achievement will increase substantially by adhering to the mission and utilizing the assets of all community members to provide avenues for student success.

The principal, the educational leader of the school, determines the selection, supervision, retention, and dismissal of well-qualified and child-centered Christian teachers; supervises teachers, looks for school improvements, stresses order and discipline through consistent behavior management; communicates expectations to staff, students, and parents; has high visibility to staff, students, and families; and ensures funding for necessary educational resources. The principal consults and collaborates with the Director of Curriculum and Professional Development in the supervision of instructional staff, design and implementation of curriculum, and delivering professional development opportunities.

The principal has high expectations for academic success and this is substantiated by collaborating with the Director of Curriculum and the faculty in annually analyzing test scores and creating curriculum improvement plans, and curriculum alignment to ensure that students achieve targeted standards-based learning goals within a set time frame. Faculty members are also assigned leadership roles as each one serves on a committee responsible for varying aspects of school life: Catholic identity, curriculum development, professional development, technology growth and implementation, student life, and others.

Student achievement excels when the school experience promotes personal and pertinent learning with students assuming the roles of leader and facilitator in their learning. This student role is encouraged by finding meaningful and influential ways for students to be responsible not only in their academic success but also in the day-to-day routines of school life. Opportunities are discovered where students can oversee tasks and projects outside the academic arena but essential in operating a safe and orderly environment.

Educational technology, 21st century skills and the prominence of digital literacy is an essential part of the curriculum at Immaculate Conception School. It is a priority of the leadership to meet the ever changing needs of the students to obtain interrelated skills that range from basic awareness and training to build consumer and user confidence, to more complex creative and critical literacies and outcomes.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

- 1. Private school association: Catholic
- 2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt $(501(c)(3) \text{ status? } \underline{\text{Yes}}$
- 3. What are the 2012-2013 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
\$6200	\$6200	\$6200	\$6200	\$6200	\$6200
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
\$6200	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
ψ0200	Ψ	Ψ	Ψ	Ψ	Ψ
12th	Other				
\$	\$				

- 4. What is the educational cost per student? (School budget divided by enrollment) \$6231
- 5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$1628
- 6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 8%
- 7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 29%

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Stanford Achievement Test

Series

Edition/Publication Year: Tenth

Edition/2002

Publisher: Pearson/Harcourt

Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	669	654	645	651	643
Number of students tested	40	45	45	48	45
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					

NOTES:

Average Score

Number of students tested

Number of students tested

No Subgroups are reported within the Diocese of Little Rock Office of Catholic Schools. No students are alternatively assessed. All students in Grades 1-6 are tested together. Pre-K and K students are not assessed. Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth Edition, 1996 was used in 2008 and 2009.

13PV200

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3

Test: Stanford Achievement Test
Series

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Edition/Publication Year: Tenth
Edition/2002
Publisher:
Pearson/Harcourt
Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	656	654	650	648	653
Number of students tested	40	45	45	48	45
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	c Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

13PV200

No Subgroups are reported within the Diocese of Little Rock Office of Catholic Schools. No students are alternatively assessed. All students in Grades 1-6 are tested together. Pre-K and K students are not assessed. Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth

Edition, 1996 was used in 2008 and 2009.

Test: Stanford Achievement Test **Subject: Mathematics** Grade: 4

Series

Edition/Publication Year: Tenth Publisher:

Edition, 1996 was used in 2008 and 2009.

Scores reported as: Scaled scores Edition/2002 Pearson/Harcourt

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	668	652	652	656	662
Number of students tested	42	46	48	45	55
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

13PV200

No Subgroups are reported within the Diocese of Little Rock Office of Catholic Schools. No students are alternatively assessed. All students in Grades 1-6 are tested together. Pre-K and K students are not assessed. Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth

Test: Stanford Achievement Test Subject: Reading Grade: 4

Series

Edition/Publication Year: Tenth Publisher:

Scores reported as: Scaled scores Edition/2002 Pearson/Harcourt

24.4.0.1, 2002	1 00130171101				
	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	669	669	658	663	668
Number of students tested	42	46	48	45	55
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

No Subgroups are reported within the Diocese of Little Rock Office of Catholic Schools. No students are alternatively assessed. All students in Grades 1-6 are tested together. Pre-K and K students are not assessed. Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth Edition, 1996 was used in 2008 and 2009.

13PV200

Test: Stanford Achievement Test **Subject: Mathematics** Grade: 5

Series

Edition/Publication Year: Tenth Publisher:

Scores reported as: Scaled scores Edition/2002 Pearson/Harcourt

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	677	667	663	684	673
Number of students tested	46	48	45	55	54
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

No Subgroups are reported within the Diocese of Little Rock Office of Catholic Schools. No students are alternatively assessed. All students in Grades 1-6 are tested together. Pre-K and K students are not assessed. Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth Edition, 1996 was used in 2008 and 2009.

13PV200

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: Stanford Achievement Test
Series

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Edition/Publication Year: Tenth
Edition/2002
Publisher:
Pearson/Harcourt
Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	678	674	672	687	678
Number of students tested	46	48	45	55	54
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

13PV200

No Subgroups are reported within the Diocese of Little Rock Office of Catholic Schools. No students are alternatively assessed. All students in Grades 1-6 are tested together. Pre-K and K students are not assessed. Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth

Edition, 1996 was used in 2008 and 2009.

Test: Stanford Achievement Test **Subject: Mathematics** Grade: 6

Series

Edition/Publication Year: Tenth Publisher:

Edition, 1996 was used in 2008 and 2009.

Scores reported as: Scaled scores Edition/2002 Pearson/Harcourt

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	694	690	687	700	709
Number of students tested	45	42	53	54	49
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	c Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

13PV200

No Subgroups are reported within the Diocese of Little Rock Office of Catholic Schools. No students are alternatively assessed. All students in Grades 1-6 are tested together. Pre-K and K students are not assessed. Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6

Test: Stanford Achievement Test
Series

Edition/Publication Year: Tenth Publisher:

Edition/2002 Pearson/Harcourt Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	697	695	694	695	704
Number of students tested	45	42	53	54	49
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

No Subgroups are reported within the Diocese of Little Rock Office of Catholic Schools. No students are alternatively assessed. All students in Grades 1-6 are tested together. Pre-K and K students are not assessed. Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth Edition, 1996 was used in 2008 and 2009.

13PV200